

NEW-YORK, SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 1912.

A Memorial to Lincoln Worthy Alike of the Nation and the Man

Product of Henry Bacon's Skill
Will Be an Impressive and
Beautiful Landmark
in the Capitol of
the Nation.

HENRY BACON, the New York architect, unanimously chosen by the Commission of Fine Arts to make design for a memorial to the memory of Abraham Lincoln in the city of Washington, recently submitted to the Lincoln Memorial Commission, of which President Taft is the chairman, his report, and the drawings, photographs and models which accompany it.

Mr. Bacon is a quiet spoken man of forty-five. He has designed many monuments. It is doubtful, however, if he has before in his professional life been so profoundly stirred, experienced the same poetic impulses or dreamed as many dreams as during the months since his appointment to evolve the Lincoln Memorial.

It is a problem in its every aspect alluring to an artist. It is more than fascinating. It has been an all-absorbing occupation to design for a people and for all time a memorial to the memory of the man who was almost as tender hearted as a woman, devoid of the least affectation, simple, direct, of inexhaustible patience, lover of manliness, truth and justice; whose benevolence and forgiveness were the very basis of his character, whose wit and laughter even the great sorrows of his life could not dispel, whose humanity was world-wide and whose power to move the hearts of men will never diminish.

It is to be a fitting monument. Congress has authorized the expenditure of \$2,000,000, the largest amount ever appropriated for a similar purpose. The cost of erecting such a memorial as planned by Mr. Bacon, according to estimates that he has received from two contractors of high standing in monumental work, will be within the legal limit of cost, exclusive of grading and landscape gardening.

Thus to be selected to submit plans to the Lincoln Memorial Commission was a great honor offering exceptional opportunity. Perhaps only the construction of the Capitol itself could be likened to it as a recognition of the position held by the architect appointed for the task.

The Commission of Fine Arts has chosen the Potomac Park site, and Mr. Bacon's drawings and photographs, that are here shown, will be submitted to Congress with the report of the Lincoln Memorial Commission.

Although the Potomac Park site has received the unanimous approval of the Commission of Fine Arts and numerous other art commissions and art societies throughout the country, from which letters in its favor are, it is said, being received at Washington almost every day, some members of the Lincoln Memorial Commission wish before making their final decision first to consider two other possible locations.

John Russell Pope, of New York City, has therefore been asked to make tentative designs for the memorial, both in the Soldiers' Home grounds and on the Meridian Hill site.

Mr. Bacon was notified by President Taft of his appointment last August, and since then has made perhaps twenty-five trips to Washington to study the possibilities, latent and obvious, of the Potomac Park situation.

"Before beginning my study of the design of this memorial," said Mr. Bacon in his office, at No. 160 Fifth avenue, a few days ago, "I believed that the site in Potomac Park was the best one for a monument to Abraham Lincoln, and since devoting my time for four months to a study of its possible development I am certain of it."

No one can look at Mr. Bacon and doubt he has a good reason for any kind of opinion to which he may, at the time, be additive. The Tribune man asked the architect if he would explain the mental processes that had caused him so emphatically to believe the Lincoln memorial should be placed in Potomac Park.

"The power of impression by an object of reverence and honor is greatest when it is secluded and isolated," Mr. Bacon replied, "for then, in quiet, and without distraction of the senses or mind, the beholder is alone with the lesson which the object is designed to teach and inspire, and will be most subject to its meaning."

"This principle of seclusion is an old one. At the height of achievement in Greece is found the Athena, in the Parthenon, and one of the seven wonders of the world was placed within the Temple of Zeus, at Olympia."

"A great example in modern times of this

value of isolation is the setting of the statue by Saint-Gaudens in Rock Creek Cemetery, in Washington. Were this setting removed the statue would lose most of its power of impression.

"The design of the Lincoln Memorial, by withdrawing into the seclusion of a monumental hall the statue of Lincoln and memorials of his two great speeches, and by placing this hall, expressing in its interior the Union, in the seclusion of an area surrounded by groves of trees, bordered by the Potomac and related to the monument to Washington, will have a significance that is not possible on any other site in the United States."

Not difficult, you see, to grasp the purpose of Mr. Bacon's remarks. Very difficult, however, to think other than as Mr. Bacon while under the influence of his strong personality. Doubtful, also, whether there will be any desire to disagree with him if, after further independent reflection, the impulse to originate an opposing mental attitude should seize one, as it probably will not.

It was by an expression about the eyes rather than because of any unusual quality in the tone of his voice or change in the customary reserve in his manner that Mr. Bacon showed how greatly the Potomac Park location appealed to his artistic sensibilities as possessing peculiar appropriateness.

"Terminating the axis which unites it with the Washington Monument," the architect continued, "it has a significance which no other site can equal, and any emulation or aspiration engendered by a memorial there to Lincoln and his great qualities will be immeasurably stimulated by being associated with the like feelings already identified with the Capitol and the monument to George Washington."

"Containing the national legislative and judicial bodies, we have at one end of the axis a beautiful building, which is a monument to the United States government. At the other end of the axis we have the possibility of a memorial to the man who saved that government, and between the two is a monument to its founder."

"All three of these structures, stretching in one grand sweep from Capitol Hill to the Potomac, will lend, one to the others, the associations and memories connected with each, and each will have its value increased by being on the one axis and having visual relation to the others."

"On a vista over two miles long, these three large structures, so placed that they will be forever free from proximity to the

turmoil of ordinary affairs and the discordant irregularity of adjacent secular buildings, will testify to the reverence and honor which attended their erection; and the impression of their dignity and stateliness on the mind of the beholder will be augmented by their surroundings, for which we have a free field for symmetrical and proper arrangement.

"They are, however, sufficiently far apart for each to be distinguished, isolated and serene, not conflicting in design or appearance the one with the other, and each will impress the observer with the reason for its existence."

To the east of the memorial, extending toward the Washington Monument, is proposed a large lagoon which will introduce into the landscape an element of repose and beauty, and in its waters the reflection of the memorial will add to its tranquility and retirement.

If a memorial bridge to Arlington is built directly connecting, as shown on the general plan, the Lincoln Memorial site with the ground containing the dust of those who gave "the last full measure of devotion" to their country, it would add, Mr. Bacon pointed out, to the meaning and solemnity of both places.

Moreover, linking together the District of Columbia with Virginia, it would be made, Mr. Bacon believes, a striking symbol of reunion between the North and the South, a most appropriate symbol leading to and from the memorial to the man who said in his first inaugural address: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies."

Mr. Bacon suggests extension of the streetcar lines down 15th street and across B street into the park, thence turning westward and running about forty feet south of the curb of B street to the 23d street entrance of the park, opposite the site of the Lincoln Memorial. This suggested extension of the streetcar lines will, Mr. Bacon says, make the Potomac Park site readily accessible, as it should be, to all classes.

"The memorial itself should be free from the near approach of vehicles and traffic," the architect continued. "Reverence and honor should suffer no distraction through lack of silence or repose in the presence of a structure reared to noble aims and great deeds."

ers memorials of his two great speeches, one of the Gettysburg speech, the other of the second inaugural address, each with attendant sculpture and painting telling in allegory of his splendid qualities evident in those speeches."

Asked where he would place the statue, Mr. Bacon replied:

"It will occupy the place of honor, a position facing the entrance which opens toward the Capitol. This position is in a central hall, separated by screens of columns from the spaces at each side, in each of which will be one of the other memorials. Each of these three memorials will thus be secluded and isolated, and will exert its greatest influence."

"I cannot imagine a memorial to Lincoln," Mr. Bacon said earnestly, "so powerful in its meaning and so appropriate to his life as an imposing emblem of the Union, including memorials of his qualities and achievements."

"Such a memorial, placed on a site of such significance and possibility of broad treatment as the site in Potomac Park, will convey its lesson with the greatest force."

Asked if the location presented obstacles in the way of making an imposing and appropriate setting for such a memorial, Mr. Bacon said there were no such difficulties to overcome. By means of an elevation of the ground the memorial, he said, would rise many feet above the top of the proposed surrounding trees, even when full grown.

It would be conspicuous from many points of view, he added, and by means of openings in the enclosing foliage would be seen in its entirety from six different monumental approaches. Its whole eastern and western facades would be exposed to view, the former towards the Washington Monument and the latter towards the Potomac River and the hills of Arlington.

By means of terraces the ground at the site of the Lincoln Memorial, if Mr. Bacon's scheme is adopted, will be raised until the same level is obtained as the ground at the base of the Washington Monument. First, a circular terrace 1,000 feet in diameter will be raised eleven feet above the present grade. On its outer edge will be planted four concentric rows of trees, leaving a plateau in the center 750 feet in diameter, which is four feet greater than the length of the Capitol. In the center of this plateau, surrounded by a wide roadway and walks, will rise a terrace sixteen feet high and 500 feet in diameter, making the total proposed elevation of ground twenty-seven feet above the present grade.

"On this," said Mr. Bacon, "will rise the memorial to Lincoln, a monument representing the Union he saved by his extraordinary gifts and powers and to which his devotion was supreme."

On a rectangular base is placed a series of pilasters or steps, thirteen in number, typifying the thirteen original states. The top step supports on its outer edge a Greek Doric colonnade of thirty-six columns, symbolizing the Union of 1865, each column representing a state existing at the time of Lincoln's death.

This colonnade of the Union surrounds the wall of the Memorial Hall, which rises through and above it, and at the top of the wall is a decoration, supported at intervals by eagles, of forty-eight memorial festoons, one for each state in the Union to-day.

"These three features of the exterior design represent the Union as originally formed," Mr. Bacon explained, "as it was at the triumph of Lincoln's life, and as it is when we plan to erect a monument to his memory."

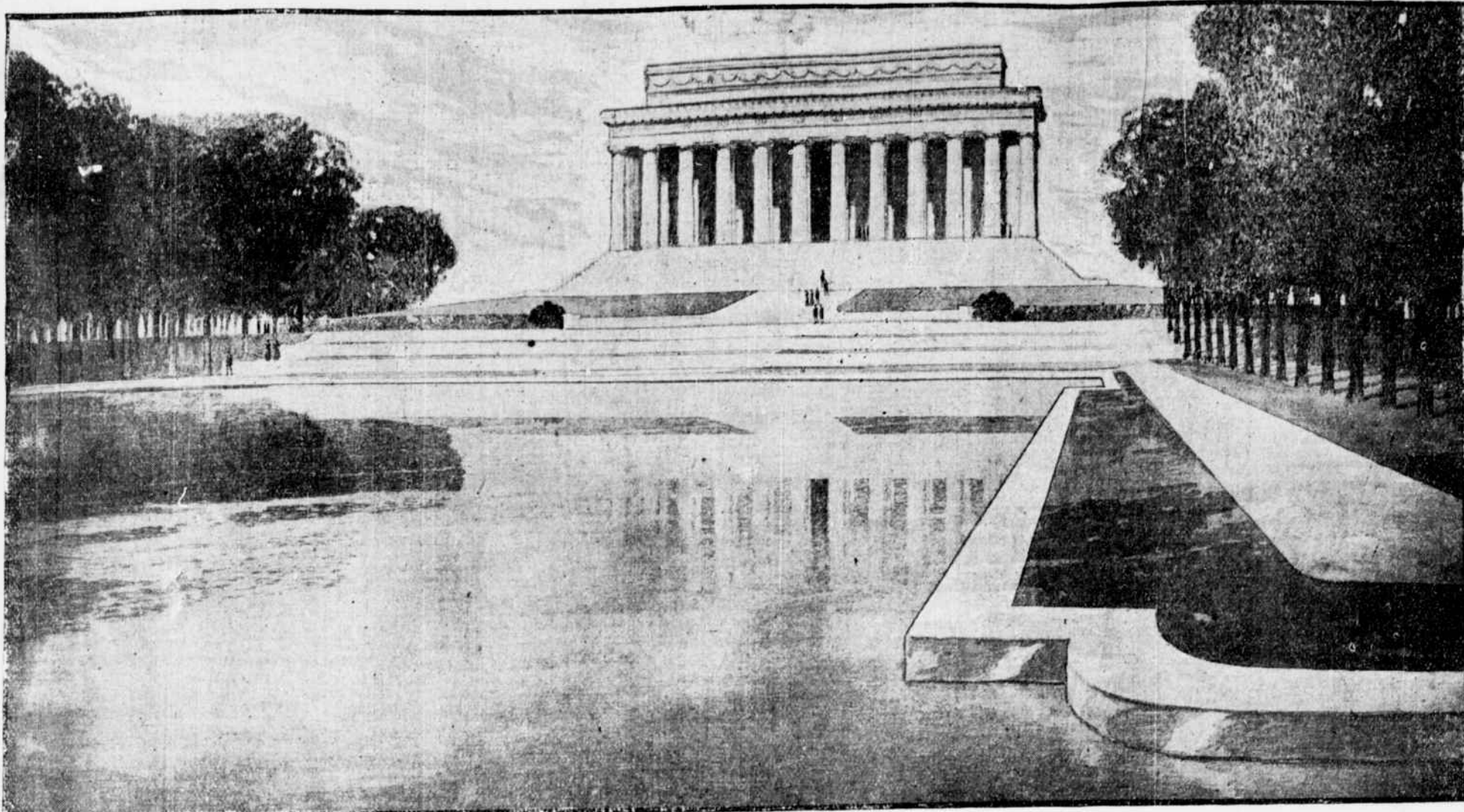
"These cumulative symbols house as their kernel the memorials of Lincoln's great qualities, which must be so portrayed to mankind that Devotion, Integrity, Charity, Patience, Intelligence and Humanity will find incentive to growth, and by contemplation of a monument to his memory and to the Union the just pride that citizens of the United States have in their country will be supplemented by increasing gratitude to Abraham Lincoln for saving it to them and to their children."

Mr. Bacon thought a long time before he made any drawings. These pictures, beautiful as they undoubtedly are, should not be taken as indicative of the architect's final effort, as there would be many last touches, such as all artists love to make before releasing their children to the rigors of the ages.

It will be noted immediately that there is nothing theatrical in the Lincoln Memorial as proposed by Mr. Bacon, but, instead, that it is broad and simple in character.

"The Washington Monument provides enough of the vertical," he said; "in the Capitol you have the dome effect, and the Lincoln Memorial would therefore furnish the horizontal element in a scene of great beauty and historical significance, not conflicting in design and making an imposing whole."

To enable him to obtain photographs of the site that would be true in perspective Mr. Bacon had erected, at its center, a pole 65 feet high, with cross arms 20 feet apart, the lowest being 25 feet above the present grade. The photographs here presented were taken from several points of view.



VIEW OF EAST FRONT OF LINCOLN MEMORIAL, SHOWING LAGOON IN FOREGROUND.



HENRY BACON.

To Form with Capitol Building
and the Washington Mon-
ument an Architectural
Trilogy Linked in
Significance.

and thirty-six feet high, is equipped with heavy doors of bronze grilles filled with plain glass. During mild weather these doors could be left open during the day, and in the cold winter months a temporary bronze and glass vestibule could be provided in the lower part of the large grilles, which are subdivided at the bottom for this purpose.

Whatever heating of the building may be necessary can be accomplished by introducing air heated in the basement by means of gas or electricity, and probably some simple scheme of ventilation by exhaust fans will be advisable.

There are some refinements shown in the models and on the drawings that have been submitted to the Lincoln Memorial Commission that are not common in modern architecture. The columns are not vertical, being slightly tilted inward toward the building, the four corner columns being tilted more than the others. The outside face of the entablature is also inclined inward, but slightly less than the axis of the columns, underneath it. The wall of the Memorial Hall inclines inward least of all. These inclinations, without being evident to the eye will, it is believed, give to the building an appearance of great stability and strength.

Objections have been made to both of the other possible sites, that of the Meridian Hill being criticized by the Commission of Fine Arts, as follows:

"It has been suggested that the Lincoln Memorial might take the form of an arch located on Meridian Hill, in the axis of 16th street. This site would depend for its effectiveness almost wholly upon the vista of 16th street. This is so narrow and the foliage extends so far into the street that for a considerable portion of the year the memorial would be hidden from view at those points where it should be most effective."

"Moreover, the region will soon be a busy one, and even now is occupied by residences of many and varied styles of architecture. Located here, the Lincoln Memorial would lack that isolation which is an essential element in the site of a great monument. In the future the Meridian Hill location will probably be used for a monument, but it is not a proper site for a memorial of supreme importance."

"Any monument on Meridian Hill off the axis of 16th street would occupy a position of distinctly inferior rank."

The Commission of Fine Arts is composed of D. H. Burnham, F. D. Millet, Thomas Hastings, Daniel C. French, Charles Moore and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. These men are appointed by President Taft under authority of an act of Congress of May 17, 1910, to designate a site for a memorial to Lincoln.

March 4, 1911, the Lincoln Memorial Commission, composed of President Taft, Senators Shelby M. Cullom, H. D. Money and George Peabody Wetmore, and Representatives Joseph G. Cannon, Champ Clark and Samuel W. McCall, applied to the Commission of Fine Arts for suggestions as to the location, plan and design for the proposed memorial, specifically requesting consideration of two sites which at various times had been recommended, and also as to the best method of selecting artists, sculptors and architects to make the designs and execute them.

The commission reported on July 17, 1911, unanimously in favor of the Potomac Park site, strongly recommending its selection. The commission is made up of men who have won the highest distinction in their several professions as architects, sculptors and city planners.

The approach to the Soldiers' Home grounds carries to the eye a view of a reservoir, a filtration plant, Glenwood Cemetery and North Capitol street, which is bordered with the ordinary secular buildings. The entrance to the grounds is about three miles from the Capitol, and critics point out that the Lincoln Memorial, if placed there, would have no relation to the great axis; also, that from Arlington one would see the Postoffice, the Willard Hotel and the State and War Departments, looming up in the foreground. The statue of Lincoln would be exposed and made, necessarily, of bronze. Many believe that marble is the last word in sculpture.

Sometimes architects by their sketches show alluring perspectives that no ordinary person could discover by studying the site itself. The drawings reproduced here are not bird's-eye views. There is nothing fanciful in these presentations. They are bonafide pictures seen from normal points of view.

Some of the photographs were taken with a telephoto lens. The drawings accompanying this article were carefully made and indicate the exact relation of the design of the Lincoln Memorial to its proposed surroundings and the public buildings in Washington.

Two borings made at the site have shown that rock exists at a depth of from forty-two to forty-four feet below the present grade. Concrete piling will be driven to the rock if this plan is adopted, and on this piling will be built the foundations extending up to the granite platform, which is 231 feet long and 188 feet wide. The material of the exterior above this granite platform is white marble.

The colonnade is 171 feet long and 105 feet wide, the columns being 40 feet high and 6 feet 9 inches in diameter at their base. The total height of the structure above the finished grade at the granite base is 88 feet. The finished grade, being 27 feet above the present grade, the total height of the building above the present grade would be 115 feet.

The memorial hall as planned is 60 feet wide and 135 feet long, and its walls and floor will be of colored marble. The ceiling, which is 90 feet high, will be supported by massive bronze beams, gilded, colored and lacquered, and light may be introduced through the ceiling, where found by experiment to be of the best advantage. The columns of the interior are of Greek Ionic order and are 50 feet high.

The statue of Lincoln would be of white marble and the tentative height of the figure on the sketch of the interior is twelve feet. The figure, if standing, would be about sixteen feet high. The memorials to the two speeches will be incorporated in the end walls of the Memorial Hall. Large tablets bearing the full text of Lincoln's two great speeches, combined with adjacent allegorical figures, will form imposing memorials. At each end of the outside vestibule are two spaces, one of which can be for the use of an attendant, and the other for a staircase giving caretakers access to the roof and basement.

The large doorway, eighteen feet wide



DETAIL OF SOUTHEAST CORNER.



VIEW FROM TOP OF WASHINGTON MONUMENT.